

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-15

USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-15 OMB-01 EUR-25 /144 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/PAB:ASCHIFFERDECKER:MRC

APPROVED BY NEA:LBLAINGEN

NEA/PAB:PDCONSTABLE (DRAFT)

S/S: MR. BARNES

WHITE HOUSE:HSAUNDERS

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R 040119Z OCT 73

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY KABUL

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 197358

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:OVIP, PFOR, AF, PK

SUBJECT: AFGHAN-PAK RELATIONS AND BHUTTO VISIT

REF: A. KABUL 6947 (NOTAL); B. KABUL 7022; C. STATE 189293

D. STATE 190163

1. DISCUSSIONS OF AFGHAN-PAK RELATIONS DURING BHUTTO VISIT
GENERALLY CAME WITHIN CONTEXT OF REGIONAL SECURITY ISSUES
AND SOVIET INTENTIONS IN SUBCONTINENT, AS INDICATED REFS
C AND D. WE DID NOT MAKE POINT OF RAISING CURRENT STATE
OF BILATERAL RELATIONS BETWEEN PAKISTAN AND AFGHANISTAN,
SINCE AT TIME SITUATION SEEMED TO BE SETTLING DOWN
SOMEWHAT.

2. IN MEETINGS WITH MEMBERS SENATE AND HOUSE FOREIGN
RELATIONS AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEES BHUTTO WAS ASKED
QUESTIONS ABOUT PAKISTAN INTERNAL AFFAIRS AND RELATIONS
WITH AFGHANISTAN, TO WHICH HE RESPONDED IN VERY RESTRAINED
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AND LOW KEY WAY. IN EFFECT, HE SAID THERE WERE NO GREAT

PROBLEMS AND THAT ONLY IF AFGHANISTAN WAS PUSHED BY OUTSIDE POWERS WOULD THERE BE GREAT CONCERNING PAKISTAN. AFGHAN AMB. MALIKYAR, WHO ATTENDED PRESS CLUB LUNCHEON AND WATCHED HIS PERFORMANCE ON "MEET THE PRESS" REMARKED THAT HE FELT BHUTTO WAS EXCEPTIONALLY RESTRAINED IN REPLY TO QUESTIONS ABOUT POTENTIAL DIFFICULTIES WITH AFGHANISTAN. IT POSSIBLE

THAT BY END OF VISIT BHUTTO HAD BEEN INFORMED OF AFGHAN ALLEGATIONS OF PAK INTERFERENCE IN AFGHAN AFFAIRS, AND THAT HE WISHED TO AVOID REMARKS THAT MIGHT EXACERBATE SITUATION.

3. REGARDING AFGHAN VIEW OF BHUTTO AS PAWN OF "PUNJABI CLIQUE" (REFTEL B), WE BELIEVE HE SO FAR HAS SHOWN HIMSELF TO BE CAPABLE OF ACTING WITH GREATER MEASURE OF FREEDOM AND FLEXIBILITY THAN PREDECESSORS ON INTERNAL MATTERS, AND THAT HE HAS BROADER-BASED SUPPORT IN PAKISTAN THAN AFGHANS CREDIT HIM WITH HAVING. WE DO NOT RULE OUT POSSIBILITY THAT HE MAY FIND POLITICAL SOLUTION TO CURRENT PROBLEMS IN FRONTIER PROVINCES, AND WE WILL SEEK TO ENCOURAGE HIM TO TAKE THAT TACK.

4. IN VIEW CURRENT STRAINED RELATIONS BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES, WE DO NOT RECOMMEND YOU SEEK TO CONVEY FOREGOING TO AFGHANS, BUT IF OPPORTUNITY ARISES IN FUTURE DISCUSSIONS WITH GOA OFFICIALS, YOU MAY WISH TO INDICATE THAT OUR VIEWS ON BHUTTO AND POSSIBILITY OF POLITICAL ACCOMODATION DIFFER SOMEWHAT FROM THEIRS. RUSH

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 04 OCT 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: morefirh
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973STATE197358
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: ASCHIFFERDECKER:MRC
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS LAINGEN
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731050/aaaabkvh.tel
Line Count: 90
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ORIGIN NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: A. KABUL 6947 (NOTAL); B. KABUL 7022, ; C. STATE 189293
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: morefirh
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12 DEC 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <12-Dec-2001 by thigpegh>; APPROVED <02-Jan-2002 by morefirh>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AFGHAN-PAK RELATIONS AND BHUTTO VISIT
TAGS: OVIP, PFOR, AF, PK
To: KABUL
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005